

Dear Parents/Carers

Launch of the SEND Short Break and School Holiday Activities Programme – Easter 2024

Brighton & Hove City Council have been working diligently to source an interesting and varied SEND Short Break and School Holiday Activity programme for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Working alongside PaCC, the important step has been taken to widen the social care offer for:

- neurodivergent children and young people, and
- children and young people with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.
- Children and young people with learning disabilities and higher support needs.

A panel, comprised of council staff and Parent Carer Community representatives, discussed the applications, and the Council awarded grants to 8 providers who will supply a range of holiday activities with more children and young people benefitting from specialist activities/short breaks in the holidays.

Although, we have been able to secure some provision for our children and young people with more complex needs more work will be undertaken to consider how we will expand this offer during the Easter and summer breaks to ensure the high support needs of these families are met and that children and young people with complex needs have access to the benefits of a short breaks and holiday programme.

The providers are:

- Active8 For Kids activ8forkids.co.uk
Places will be available to book from 26th February
- Amaze amazesussex.org.uk
Places will be available to book from 26th February
- Angling4Education Angling4Education | youth interventions Sussex
Places will be available to book from Mid-April for May half-term
- Brighton & Hove Albion Foundation bhafcfoundation.org.uk
Places will be available to book from 26th February
- Downs Syndrome Development Trust Down Syndrome Development Trust - Sussex Community Foundation
Places will be available to book from 26th February
- Parable Dance About us | Parable Dance
Places will be available to book from 4th March for Easter
- Treasure Boxing Treasure Boxing Club
Places will be available to book from 26th February

The council decision making panel have commissioned organisations, aimed to specifically target children and young people who:

- have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP),
- receive middle or higher rate Disability Living Allowance (DLA),
- receive a Personal Care Plan Payment (under 16) or Personal Independence Payment (16+),
- attend a Specialist School or Special Facility Placement, or
- have highly specialised needs and have undergone a social care assessment.

This programme will be heavily subsidised by the council and there will be a small charge to access the activities.

If you receive a direct payment, you will be able to arrange with the providers directly to use these funds towards paying for the activities (unfortunately you will not yet be able to use these to pay via the Eequ system). If any parent or carer finds themselves financially unable to pay, we advise that you speak to your SEND Caseworker or Social Worker for advice and to explore assistance options.

We will use the Eequ Booking System for parents and carers to book activities. This is the same system used by the Holiday Activities & Food (HAF) Programme**, so many of you will already be familiar with it.

You do not need to pre-register on Eequ, simply book the activity that you want and complete the questions at checkout. Your booking may take 3-4 days to approve, so please be patient. You will receive a second email when it has been approved. .

If anyone needs help or assistance, please speak to your Social Worker or SEND Support Officer. If you have any technical difficulties, then you can click MESSAGE SUPPORT in the Eequ System and the Eequ team will respond promptly.

Bookings for the Easter school holiday activities will open the week beginning Monday 26th February 2024, and can be accessed here:

[Brighton & Hove SEND Short Breaks/Activities · Eequ](#)

Implementing this programme is the first step in providing additional suitable provision to meet needs. Other programmes and projects underway are already addressing the gaps, especially regarding specialist provision, and services are being re-shaped to meet those needs going forward.

Brighton & Hove Council recognise that families needing specialist support will feel anxious about what the offer for complex needs will be going forward. Senior officers are aware of this and will share news and information around this support as soon as possible.

Whilst acknowledging the gaps in developing the offer for children and young people with complex needs, our intention is that the programme, going forward from Easter, will provide enriching and enjoyable holiday activities and short breaks for our SEND children and young people.

***The Easter HAF programme will be available to book from 21st February 2024. This programme is for all those school-aged children and young people in Reception to Year 11 who receive benefits-related free school meals (FSM). The online central booking system for this is <https://eequ.org/brightonhovehaf> ***

February 2024